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ABSTRACT

Trends, such as a massive increase in globalization, neo-liberalization, and economic rationalization, have been supported and directed by major governments and major financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The pact between the World Bank and the IMF has created an economic juggernaut that is having an increasingly severe impact on world natural environments, education, social, and health-care systems. The influence of globalization and its effects within Australia have been well documented for several decades. This paper discusses how corporate-driven global economic policy, as directed by corporate instruments, in particular the IMF and the World Bank, is creating and maintaining overwhelming downward pressure on all world economies. The paper states that the brutalization of society and its consequences are examined as part of the discussion, leading to a discussion into the role of educators in engendering caring for others and self, through critical reflection, as a means to promote a healthier and more caring society. It focuses on Australia, contending that "Australia's complicity and duplicity with the IMF is both saddening and regrettable." The paper argues the case for students to learn reflective practice, or at least the processes involved, to be afforded an opportunity to be superior caring and contributing members of society. It states that continual positive questioning of self, values, and motives through critical thinking and journals in particular, can lead to increased understanding of the interconnected nature of society and other cultures. (Contains 31 references.) (BT)

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Corporatisation, Global Banking Impact on the Australian Education System: Reflecting on care

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The last half-century and in particular the last 20 years has seen an unprecedented and massive increase in globalisation, neo-liberalisation, and economic rationalisation (Sefton, 2000: 10-31), (Rich, 1994: 25), (Margison, 1993: 55-80). These trends have been supported and directed by major governments (G7) and major financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). The pact between the World Bank and IMF has created an economic juggernaut that is having increasingly severe impact on world natural environments, education, social and health-care systems. The influence of globalisation and its effects within Australia have been well documented for several decades, however despite numerous well argued cases detailing ways that globalisation is changing society there has been little or no informed popular debate on the topic. This was highlighted by the 2001 federal election that saw what amounted to a policy-free election with bilateral and unquestioned support for Australia's economic direction and place in the world economy. The author, in a 2002 straw poll of 120 university science undergraduates, found less than one in ten had heard of the IMF or World Bank. Of this sub-group not one student was able to articulate what role the IMF or World Bank played in global or local economies, much less how they might impact on individuals and minority groups. If these observations are even close to the facts the political and social sensibility of the majority of the population does not seem to be directed towards whether one needs to know about the "big picture". The direction of modern education and working life would appear to be more to do with: "Sustaining a consistent identity and having an overall work career depend[ing] much more on the individual than it did previously." (Giddens, 2000: 27)

Whilst Giddens sees potential strengths in globalisation such as, reduction of women's subordination and increasing democratisation (Giddens, 2000: 27), he also alludes in the above, to an obligatory by-product, or perhaps underlying tenet of, the current global economic imperative being asocial individualisation. This individualisation, it can be argued, allows at best corporate greed and conspicuous individual wealth to go unquestioned and at worst is a major contributor to a worldwide decrease in concern and care for other beings and the natural environment.

The following discussion will overview how corporate driven global economic policy, as directed by corporate instruments, in particular the IMF and World Bank, is creating and

maintaining overwhelming downward pressure on all world economies. This pressure is producing widening economic and social divides between rich and poor, promoting resource stripping of the natural environment, and generating brutalisation and lack of care towards other beings. The brutalisation of society and its consequences will be looked at also as part of the discussion. This will lead the discussion into the role of educators in engendering caring for others and self, through critical reflection, as a means to promoting a healthier and more caring society.

To gain insight to world economic direction it is instructive to look at how, the IMF and its sibling the World Bank, as major world banking / monetary institutions operate. As Weissman explains the World Bank and IMF are closely aligned, both forming at the same time in history (mid 1940's). Their initial goals were post-war reconstruction and fixing exchange rates but this soon changed to Third World development. Both institutions are interdependent with the IMF performing a customer "gate-keeper" role for the World Bank (Weissman, 2001: 84-98). The structural adjustment programs (discussed below) of both groups are almost indistinguishable (Weissman, 2001: 84-98). Given similarities and general focus of the World Bank and IMF, a discussion of the IMF and its policies affords a succinct and parallel overview of the state of this level of economic control.

On reviewing the IMF's web site, and its public information, it is apparent that areas of policy are vague and speak, in often paternalistic tones, of greater good for all – the powerful helping the weak; short-term pain (for some) for the long-term goal of free trade and social and economic utopia for all members.

> While it pays lip service to "transparency", the IMF offers virtually no substantive public documentation of its decisions, except for a few pages in press releases that are shorn of the technical details needed for a serious professional evaluation of its programmes. Remarkably, the international community accepts this state of affairs as normal. (Sachs, 1997)

The literature clearly indicates a high level of opposition to the IMF and its policies. From its inception it has been contentious, coercive and colonialist.

The IMF was established immediately post-war (1946) in Washington DC and some of its first financial assistance (to Holland) was used to fund the Dutch war against

Indonesian nationalists (Rich, 1994: 69). Since its birth into the turmoil and uncertainty of the cold war the IMF's main goals have been worldwide trade expansion and monetary regulation (International Monetary Fund, 2001b). The IMF's capitalistic agenda of expansion and regulation, using debt as impetus, has had huge social impact across the world.

The IMF's purposes in Article 1 clearly define their purpose in relation to trade expansion, regulation and multilateral exchange of money, and state that; "The fund shall be guided in all its policies and decisions by these purposes." (International Monetary Fund, 2001b)

Article 1 states the purposes are for the benefit of all members. To be eligible for financial assistance countries must be members of the IMF. This membership is gained by paying proportionate financial quotas that are calculated on the economic size of the country. (International Monetary Fund, 2001d). This also relates to voting power of the country. Of the 180 odd members the G7 countries hold more than 40% of the quota with United States holding 17.5% (International Monetary Fund, 2001c), (50 Years Is Enough, 2001c).

This quota system effectively gives the US and its corporations, in particular, control of the IMF and its policies. This means that what is in the interest of US corporate, domestic and foreign policy will be reflected largely in the operation of the IMF. The ostensive roots of this control can be seen as early as 1944 when the US told Britain that it would withhold war loans unless they supported the creation of the IMF and its veiled policies of long-term debt creation and economic and social control of less powerful countries (Howard, 2000).

The poorest countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America are the leading borrowers and debtors of the IMF. These countries have such poor economies that they are unable to obtain loans from other financial institutions. A group of around 90 third world countries (around 1.4 billion people – 350 million in Indonesia alone) are directly controlled by the IMF and it's fiscal policy (50 Years Is Enough, 2001c), (Sachs, 1997), (Bandow, 1998).

The control exerted on these economically impoverished countries encompasses social, political and economic spheres. Control is exerted via Structural Adjustment Programs

(SAP's) that are supposed to restore sustainable economic growth (International Monetary Fund, 2001d). SAP conditions commonly demand reductions in government spending, increasing interest rates, loosening of foreign ownership, privatisation of public utilities, and elimination of tariffs. (50 Years Is Enough, 2001c), (Pilger, 2001).

These conditions in effect result in user-pays in health and education, crippling of already weakened governments, spiralling inflation, and loss of money to off-shore transnationals. (Bandow, 1998), (50 Years Is Enough, 2001c)

Poor countries' debt repayments exceed per capita repayments of wealthy western countries (50 Years Is Enough, 2001a). The following statistics add weight to this statement: Uganda spends $3 per capita on health and $17 in debt servicing; debt has increased from 200 – 400% since 1980 in developing countries; of $2.9bn in loans to poor countries $1.9bn was used to service previous loans (50 Years Is Enough, 2001a). This upward spiral of debt and downward spiral of living conditions assures total compliance meeting IMF loan conditions.

Health and education services are among the first civic victims of IMF policy. The SAP conditions that are imposed with loans usually have requirements for governments to show economic restraint and downsizing and to cost-share. This cost-sharing means that once free and very basic health and education systems become user-pays systems thereby excluding large numbers of people from even basic services – this is even more pronounced with disadvantaged social groups such as females. A clear example of how even small fees disadvantage access is detailed in the following:

> School fees have led to reduced school enrollment, especially for girls. When Malawi eliminated a modest school fee in 1994, primary enrollment soared by 50% almost overnight—from 1.9 to 2.9 million pupils. When Uganda recently eliminated school fees, the primary school enrollment rate climbed from 50% to 90%. (50 Years Is Enough, 2001b)

IMF forced cutbacks and cost-sharing in health has similar disastrous effect when fees exclude the poor and create further care burden on already overworked and under resourced female family members (Global Exchange, 2001). UNICEF workers are reporting that critically unwell children are dying after being refused admission, to SAP

driven health centres, for lack of the hospital registration fee of US 33¢, (50 Years Is Enough, 2001b).

Australia's complicity and duplicity with the IMF is both saddening and regrettable. Australia like 183 other countries is a member of the IMF and is currently in the top 15 countries for voting and quota rights. Australia has 60% more voting power than Indonesia (International Monetary Fund, 2001c). This is a per capita ratio of approximately twelve to one.

John Howard's speech (which reads like an IMF fact sheet) to President Wahid in 2001 strongly indicates Australia's ongoing commitment to IMF policy.

> My government committed more than US$1 billion to the IMF's rescue package for Indonesia. We pushed hard for IMF terms that took due account of the many difficulties that Indonesia faced in its momentous transition.
> It is also in support of this transition that we have shaped our substantial aid programme. I can assure you, Mr President, that Australia will continue to encourage the international financial institutions and others to tailor their advice and terms to Indonesia's needs and abilities.
> At the same time, economic reform and prudent, predictable economic management are crucial for Indonesia's national cohesion and prosperity.
> Millions of Indonesians have been lifted out of poverty in the last three decades. The financial crisis reversed some of these gains. But the ground lost can be made up with stable policy-making and a clear determination to implement economic reform over time. A reform of global trade rules through a new round of multilateral trade negotiations will open markets for Indonesian agricultural and textile products. (Howard, 2001)

This outward expression of support for the IMF is echoed by the Federal Treasurer and indicates Australia's economic direction is directly in line with IMF goals.

> The Treasurer, Mr Peter Costello, said the IMF had endorsed Australia's economic management and applauded the Government's landmark tax reform plans. But he said the report highlighted the need to push ahead with economic reform to create more jobs and increase living standards. He also signalled a tough Budget on 9 May, saying he would keep a "firm line on spending" to protect the surplus.
> (Hudson, 2000)

The implication of this open and willing embrace of IMF (and similar world trade and financial institutions) has enormous implications for Australia and its future. To keep in

line with IMF free trade goals and "economic responsibility" Australia, cap-in-hand, is unwittingly travelling the same path as its poorer neighbours. With increasing poverty and disadvantage to indigenous communities, substantial dismembering of public health and education systems, user-pays, and privatisation of public utilities, Australia is apparently playing the game perfectly by IMF rules. Australia however is neither the US nor a G7 country and has only 1.5% of IMF votes and therefore doesn't control any of the rules. Australia in international free trade terms is a country asset rich and ripe for the picking. The potential picture of education and health and the economy in Australia can readily be viewed in most poor IMF member countries. As Australia's growing population of poor and disenfranchised becomes increasingly marginalised this is not an uncommon theme in other developed nations – even US citizens are not unaffected.

Transnational corporations drive supposed IMF policy, and policy directions via the US Treasury Department (Weissman, 2001: 87). Attempts by the, democratically voted, US Congress to control IMF policy has in most instances failed as the real control over decision making in the IMF rests with consensual resolutions made via the IMF for corporate interests – corporations then utilise IMF SAP's to increase investment and trade (Weissman, 2001: 84-98 87). The following maxim would seem to be apt when assessing whether transnational corporations are involved with IMF policy: *When analysing the reason for decisions look to see who gains the most.*

Western economic, welfare, health and education reforms (unchanged since the advent of the Reganomic/Thatcherite era) are having significant impacts on the US and other G7 nations as well as Australia. Rising American statistics bear this out with: trade deficit increasing by 170 billion dollars in less than nine years; 17% of the population living below the poverty line; homelessness passing seven million; 20% of adults being functionally illiterate; 14 million children without basic food security; and 44 million people with no health insurance (Mittal, 2001: 178-80). The IMF SAP's that demand currency devaluation of debtor nations cause increasing pressure in US domestic economy by increasing import costs, reducing purchasing power, and costing jobs. (Mittal, 2001: 180) The drive for flexibility of labour markets, removal of workers rights and associated increasing inequality are contributing to breakdown of social systems in the US

> Corporate-driven structural adjustment has triggered severe social stress in both the North and South. The United States, after dismantling many of the social mechanisms of the New Deal, has addressed the discontent through punitive measures. US expenditures on criminal justice have increased four times faster than the budget for education, and twice as fast as outlays on hospitals and health. Today the United States has achieved the dubious distinction of imprisoning a larger share of its population than any other nation. (Mittal, 2001: 181)

Some economic rationalists would argue that the problem with the continuing economic decline of IMF controlled countries is due to poor application of SAP's and endemic corruption. Toeing the IMF line is however a proven recipe for corporate gain and state decline. This is evidenced by Argentina who, during the mid 1990's was lionised as a glowing example of the positive effect of IMF and World Bank restructuring. Argentina's president, of the time, Carlos Menem privatised public assets including profit making airlines and the county's postal service – subsequently the airlines were asset stripped and pushed to bankruptcy and the postal service (whilst taking profits) has never payed a dollar of the purchase price. The postal corporation is currently suing the government for renegotiation of its "unfair" contract (Lester, 2002). Argentina's decade long tango with the IMF has resulted in the sale of nearly all government assets and after a brief economic boom was left with twice the debt ($150b) (Lester, 2002). The immense downward economic and social pressure this is causing is prompting some Argentineans to speak of impending civil war (Lester, 2002).

The preceding arguments clearly detail that the results of transnational corporate greed are social breakdown, spiralling state and personal debt and increasing inequality. This inequality is not just the increasing economic divide between rich and poor it is also reflected in an increasing lack of concern and care for others. As stated in following elegiac quote from Fidel Castro's, speech to G77 (a U.N. body representing the majority of the world's population) the passengers in First Class neither have little interest nor care for those travelling as slaves in the hold.

> Globalization is an objective reality underlining the fact that we are all passengers on the same vessel: This planet where we all live. But passengers are travelling in very different conditions.
> Trifling minorities are travelling in luxurious cabins furnished with cell phones and access to the Internet and global communication networks. They enjoy a nutritious, abundant, and balanced diet as well as clean water supplies. The have access to sophisticated medical care and to culture.

> Overwhelming and hurting majorities are travelling in conditions that resemble the terrible slave trade from Africa to America in our colonial past. Eighty-five percent of the passengers on this ship are crowded into its dirty hold, suffering hunger, disease, and helplessness. (Castro, 2001)

This begs the question of how equitable sharing may occur. Philanthropy as an indicator of social care and commitment, especially from big business appears to be declining. Non-Government-Organisations, involved in aid to others, are becoming increasingly squeezed between corporate interest and the individual's need to protect and advance their apparent tenuous economic position in society - It is hard to give money to strangers when security of job, family and self are overriding day-to-day concerns.

Instead of socially inspired and historically often anonymous contributions, businesses want a cut of the action for every dollar spent – the board and shareholders are all-important and the events are no more than commercial vehicles. Corporations demand naming rights and ownership of what were once were community owned events. This can be readily seen in any number of sporting and other community events. The corporate argument put forward in supporting these major events, is the high monetary costs necessitating their "civic involvement" to keep the events alive. The resultant corporate spectacles however are invariably taxpayer and community funded, moneymaking exercises for the corporations themselves. The Grand Prix at Melbourne's Albert Park is a characteristic example of this type of hijacking of public property and monies. The local community members, who decide to participate, then suffer a further indignity in having to pay to attend the event their taxes and land make possible.

Lack of corporate social interest and care fits the picture of globalised economies where care is trampled in the charge for development and expanding power bases. This corporate greed is reflected in the individual who is primed from childhood to be a consumer. A basic rule of consumerism is that one must get, at any practical and lowest cost, what is best for self. Seeing self as disconnected from community and the larger social and natural environment is part of the Faustian bargain that consumerism entails. It has been a constructivist argument for many years that self is shaped through canonical images, and how one talks about things.

> *How* one *talks* comes to be how one represents what one talks about…If he, *the student* (my italics), fails to develop any sense of what I shall call reflective

> intervention in the knowledge he encounters, the young person will be operating continually from the outside in – the knowledge will control and guide him. If he succeeds in developing such a sense, he will control and select knowledge as needed. If he develops a sense of self that is premised on his ability to penetrate knowledge for his own uses, and if he can share and negotiate the result of his penetrations, then he becomes a member of the culture-creating community. (Bruner, 1986: 131-32)

Using Bruner's argument, the language of consumerism is what most of us use to represent our world, society and self. This is a dominant discourse of the West and is determinedly nurtured and pushed by corporate interests. This form of politicisation can be seen across all areas of human endeavour –Home, school, entertainment, personal relationships, approaches to environment, spiritual and religious matters, self-image, and appreciation of other cultures. Much of the politicisation we encounter is masked and passed on to us covertly. Current examples are recent advances in viral marketing and the increasingly advertorial nature of popular interview/entertainment television shows. Several current high rating prime time shows are back-to-back advertisements for the show's guests and their products – The chat show program Rove Live exemplifies this approach where advertising is hidden behind a matey, humorous entertainment façade. The periods in the show, not relating to product promotion, are little longer than the time you can hold your breath. This corporate politicisation of our society is omnipresent, widely accepted and growing swiftly.

Current politicisation of the community has core values of normalisation of populations, economic growth (read consumerism) and "protecting our turf". This politicisation is corporate and media driven but as already mentioned has wide mmunity acceptance. Recent and on-going popularist stances on issues in Australia concerning military attacks on Afghanistan, immigration, refugees, unions, and indigenous equity are illustrations of this kind of politicisation. All but a handful of Australians are making effort towards rewriting this principal political script. The price these groups pay is demonisation by the media and our leaders (with some eccentric reasoning) as un-Australian, out-of-touch elitists, or apologists for fundamental religious terrorist groups. The dissenting voices of Australia are being battered and marginalised.

Normalisation of the Australian population is only possible when critical reflection is kept to a minimum and competitive individualism is promoted as the acme of human endeavour.

> The corporate ideologues believe that they are the only model for human nature. They believe that the fully-actualised human being is essentially a self-interested individual – just like them. Selfishness is natural. Every other human quality or ideal is 'artificial'. It really is that simple. (Rayson, 2002: Extra 6)

Critical reflection currently has low popularity as it entails deep and focussed thought rather than dwelling in the realm of economic expansion, game and home improvement shows, shopping, and new toys. Critical reflection demands we accept and deal with, ever celebrate, ambiguity and doubt and recognise the connectedness and need to care for one another, other animals, and our natural environment. It holds intuition, feelings, and creativity equally as important as rationality in the project of becoming a developed and communal person. Through reflection a better understanding of oneself and our place in the world may be attained - Care, respect, and compassion are given fertile ground in which to flourish. Sensitive and appropriate action towards all beings and our world in general is a child of the mother of deep and reflective thought. The preceding are not things to dwell too deeply upon if one is committed to extension and growth of the self at cost to the world. The role of critical reflection rates highly, as an antidote to cultures of selfishness and care-less-ness.

Selfishness and lack of care creates distancing between people and breeds brutality and violence. Recent critiques of the US "war against terrorism" highlight the escalation of misery caused by lack of reflection and care.

> New Yorkers responded to the attack *(September 11th)* with courage and compassion... This surge of mateship was matched by a spell of self-examination which offered hope for how the White House might deal with the attacks... "Let us take time to deliberate," suggested a foreign relations expert, who argued that military force would be less effective in undermining terrorists than a demonstration of restraint. Others, too, urged the US to hold its fire, and avoid further suffering. Some called for a period of deep reflection. These voices were submerged in a sea of flags as the loudspeakers blared *God Bless America.* (Neville, 2002: 31)

The approach taken by the US government has continuing massive popular support from its people. This indicates a level of self-interest that is not only harming innocent people but also ultimately harming the very people who unthinkingly and self-righteously

support, as Rear Admiral Stufflebeem puts it, "... a shadow war" against "...shadowy people" (Neville, 2002: 35). Pointlessly and brutally many of the, estimated 4 000, Afghanis that have been killed in the war, led by US forces, are innocents – children and non-participatory adults.

This lack of reflective skill is not unique to the US but is endemic in Australia as well. There has been little or no debate from any side of politics demanding reflection, deliberation, restraint, support, and or compassion for the victims of the whole grisly 9/11 and afghan episode. Australia is keeping the faith, doing its bit to maintain the status quo – An appropriate battle cry would seem "We like what we've got (and more of it) and we'll fight, at any cost, to defend it". Even reasonable levels of reflection as to the nature of what makes for a safe and economically stable world would have to look closely at the concepts of equity, sharing, care, and compassion.

Given the arguments so far the role that educators can play in increasing people's ability to reflect is hopefully evident. Whether educators see their role primarily as a trainer for industry (corporations) or an educator for community must be seriously addressed.

If the role is one of trainer only, we need do little more than to keep pumping out, ever more efficient training packages, all the while looking for leaner and more competitive ways of providing corporations and the individual with neo-liberally sound means to compete and survive.

> Young people talk as if curiosity, adventure, rebellion, discovery, reflection are all part of some kind of old-fashioned romance. Today's child is discouraged by teachers, parents, and the world at large from treating education as anything other than a mechanism for getting a job. A way of fitting in. The very idea of a student life – filled with adventure and wilfulness and romance and even decadence – is now a luxury for the super-rich. (Rayson, 2002: Extra 6)

The role of educator for a caring community entails a far less certain and more adventurous path. Commitment to the community of humans and stewardship towards the environment are key characteristics needed for this type of educator. What is required is a strong ethic of care and an even stronger will to endure the slings and arrows of corporate ideologues.

> Education is about learning to deal with uncertainty and ambiguity. It is about learning to savor the journey. It is about inquiry and deliberation. It is about becoming critically minded and intellectually curious, and it is about learning how to frame and pursue your own educational aims. It is not about regaining our competitive edge. (Eisner, 1992: 722-3)

A methodology that aims to generate critically reflective educators and students is the use of reflective journals. The literature of Schön, Chomsky, Bruner, Wells, Ghaye and Aoki provide clear and convincing arguments on the complexity of teaching and the need for understanding self and professional practice, in order to improve praxis and/or political participation in the world.

Schön in the introduction to his seminal book, The Reflective Practitioner (Schön, 1991) mentions that competent practitioners have a high capacity to reflect on what they know and do (P. viii). The concept of reflective work, especially in health care, is strongly advocated by Ghaye and Lillyman (Ghaye and Lillyman, 2000). They believe that the process of reflective practice is about core caring values, constructing realities, and political change. Constructing useful realities is hard to achieve if as Bruner suggests unauthentic images of selfhood are imposed by society on those that lack critical faculties (1986: 131). As previously quoted from Bruner, "How one talks comes eventually to be how one represents what one talks about." This "talking" can only be authentic if one has developed the ability to be critical and have the ability to reflect this critically towards oneself.

Wells supports Bruner and advocates that children be taught to think critically from an early age to be able to be "meaning-makers" rather than "meaning-users" (Wells, 1986). His approach is one of collaboration and student focus. Chomsky (Corson, 1993: 164 - 186) uses stronger language abhorring the idea of direct instruction and advocating voluntary and self-directed learning. This is the type of learning that is possible using reflective journals.

In the following example of critical reflection on the discipline of teaching Doug Aoki talks of the complexity of practice in relation to teaching and provides some challenging insights. Understanding such as this can only come about through painstakingly, open, courageous and critical reflection upon practice.

> Teaching, however, is not neurosurgery, just as reading is not dentistry, and the teaching of sociology is not about the immaculate transmission of objects of knowledge. Nor is it about the closure of meaning in understanding or the production of what Lather (1997) calls comfort texts. Instead, it insists on thinking "differently" - that is, thinking in a materially difficult way about precisely what the "art of teaching" leaves out. If we exclude something, regardless of the goodness or inclusivity of our intentions, then we are refusing to admit it to the classroom. And what we keep out of the classroom is precisely what we refuse to teach. The "art of teaching" is therefore a profound refusal to teach. (Aoki, 2000)

Tertiary health educators, formally surveyed by the author in 2001, indicated strong support of reflective journals and the need for developing reflective skills to become competent clinicians.

The case put here is for students to learn reflective practice, or at least the processes involved, in order to be afforded an opportunity to be superior caring and contributing members of our society. Older students it is argued, by some, get little from this type of learning, due years of educational socialisation. If however, students are not introduced to this form of critical learning when they are studying then it is probable they will not encounter it after leaving school. As Wells and Bruner argue, critical thinking should be taught from as early an age as practical. These are reasons enough to at least introduce and support the process to assist students in finding their own educational direction and advance their understanding of community.

Continual positive questioning of self, values, and motives through critical thinking and journals in particular, can lead to increased understanding of the interconnected nature of society and other cultures. To understand another's situation, to empathise, is to eliminate distance. To eliminate distancing between people and their cultures leaves no room for brutality and violence. Generating compassion and care towards others and championing stewardship for nature are genuinely political and radical actions that have the capacity to wrest power and control from corporations and return it to caring communities.

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